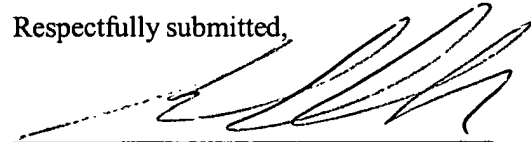


The disclosure of Rittershaus, U.S. Pat. No. 6,410,022 is regarded as valid evidence of prior invention of the subject matter claimed in the present application by another. Therefore, in view of the subject matter disclosed in and encompassed by the Rittershaus patent, Applicants elect not to address the rejections set forth in the Office Action of August 20, 2003 and to abandon the present application.

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.138(b) and pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.33(b)(1), the undersigned is authorized to submit this express abandonment as a duly appointed attorney of record.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with the filing of this paper to Deposit Account No. 50-0268.

Respectfully submitted,

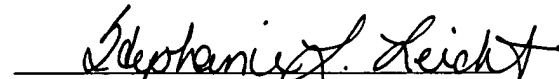


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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as First Class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on the date indicated below.

November 18, 2003  
date

  
Stephanie L. Leicht